

COMMENTS to HIGH SPEED RAIL AUTHORITY
ASSOCIATED BUILDERS AND CONTRACTORS of CALIFORNIA
October 4, 2012

Good morning Mr. Morales, Chairman Richard and members of the California High Speed Rail Authority:

My name is Juli Broyles. I am speaking today on behalf of Associated Builders and Contractors of California. ABC California is an organization of Merit Shop construction employers. Merit Shop is a way of doing business in which companies reward employees based on performance and encourage them to reach their highest level of achievement and where contracts are awarded based on safety, quality, and value, regardless of labor affiliation.

ABC California, over the past 10-12 years, has worked continuously to ensure that all licensed contractors, union and non-union alike, have equal opportunity to bid and be awarded public contracts paid for by California taxpayers at the state and local level.

Last week in Kern County, at a meeting of "...more than 100 local small minority contractors, the local newspaper in Bakersfield (where the meeting was held) reported, "...Responding to repeated questions by local small businesses and their advocates, two top rail authority officials acknowledged that the project's prime contractors have signed exclusive union labor agreements." Mr. Richards and Mr. Morales both indicated to the group that they are aware this is a hurdle to achieving their 30% small business participation goal.

Policy

ABC California believes this is an unreasonable and discriminatory to fully qualified contractors and their employees who are non-union shops.

A new report just released this week by the California State Treasurer's Office shows that just a decade ago, bond debt was just over 3.5 percent of the state's general fund, costing every Californian about \$800 a year to pay it off.

Next year, it's estimated to jump to nearly 9 percent and with every taxpayer three times more – over \$2400 per year in new out of pocket costs per Californian to pay the servicing of that bond debt. The reason we mention this is big spike *in bond deb* includes \$42 billion in bond monies, half of it to transportation projects – and most notably the High Speed Rail bond.

ABC members are very concerned that exclusive union-only contracting decisions, such as Project Labor Agreements, deny nearly 83% of California's construction workforce the ability to work on public work projects reducing competition and significantly driving up costs to taxpayers.

We believe that if all California taxpayers are paying for this project - then every effort should be made by HSRA to ensure that every single contractor and their workers – union and non-union--have a fair opportunity to bid on and be awarded contracts with no "union only" strings attached.

PLAs put special interests ahead of the public interest by restricting the bidding process to ONLY contractors backed by big labor unions – denying others the opportunity to do a better job at a better price for the taxpayer. In fact, to achieve the 30% small business hiring goals, it is imperative that HSRA build this project using Fair and Open Competition.

For that reason, Associated Builders and Contractors asks HSRA to adopt a Fair and Open Competition policy at your November Board meeting that will guarantee the following:

The California High Speed Rail Authority shall not, in any contract for the construction or maintenance of High Speed Rail Construction, require that a contractor, subcontractor, material supplier, or carrier engaged in the construction or maintenance of the project, execute or otherwise become party to any project labor agreement, collective bargaining agreement, pre-hire agreement, or other agreement with employees, their representatives, or any labor organization as a condition of bidding, negotiating, being awarded, or performing work.

With government budgets stretched to the breaking point and essential services being cut, it is critical that taxpayers get the best quality work at the best price – and adoption of this policy will assure that.

Thank you.

October 3, 2012

Chairman Dan Richard
California High Speed Rail Authority
770 L Street, Suite 800
Sacramento, California 95814

Re: Extension of Public Review – EIR/EIS: Fresno to Bakersfield

Chairman Richard and Authority Board Members,

We are asking for an extension of 365 days in order to have time to read and understand the EIR/EIS: Fresno to Bakersfield document.

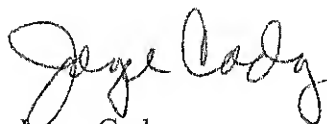
My husband and I farm and are landowners in Kings County who will be impacted by the High Speed Rail coming through our County. We harvest our deciduous fruit from May through September. We start our walnut harvest in September and finish the harvest in October. The High Speed Rail will have a huge impact on us and our farming practices and we must have the time to review the document.

We do not have time to read and study the document during fruit harvest and walnut harvest. The only public document in Kings County is at the County library which is closed when we would have time to review it.

The CD's of the EIR/EIS: Fresno to Bakersfield can be read on the computer, but cannot be printed out. And why is that? It seems to us that every effort on your part has been made to make it almost impossible for the residents of Kings County to have access to this document and to have sufficient time to review it.

Again, we are asking for an extension of 365 days in order to have time to read and understand the EIR/EIS Fresno to Bakersfield document.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "Joyce Cody".

Joyce Cody
7813 13th Ave.
Hanford, CA 93230

Carol Walters
13343 Grangeville Blvd.
Hanford, CA 93230
October 03, 2012

Chairman Dan Richards
California High Speed Rail Authority
770 L Street, Suite 800
Sacramento, California 95874

Dear Chairman Richards and Board Members of the California High-Speed Rail Authority

RE: Public Comment Period for Revised Draft of the EIR/EIS for Fresno to Bakersfield.

As a resident of California who is to be severely impacted by the High Speed Rail t the Western Alignment through Kings County, it is absolutely necessary to request an additional minimum of 730 days of time to attempt to read and respond to the Revised Draft of the EIR/EIS for Fresno To Bakersfield.

I and many others are struggling to read the complex viewing of the Draft EIR/EIS on the internet. It is not user friendly and is very time consuming. This compounded with the basic demands of life, is a total nightmare trying to work with it. The same frustration is voiced by many.

The California High Speed Rail Authority has had many years to write, review and work with these voluminous documents. Yet at the meetings with the Kings County Board of Supervisors and the citizens of Kings County, Chairman Richards voiced that he did not know the answers to the Kings County Board of Supervisors questions stated for over a year. Plus Tom Richards and Jeff Abercrombie with Chairman Richards did not know the answers. However, I as a citizen diligently working to save our investment and property, am expected to read the entire 15,000 pages, compare this document with previous statements and respond to the comment period as a responsible citizen. The current comment period is beyond comprehension nor is it a feasible workability of time given the complexity of the documents.

It is essential to extend the comment period for a minimum of 730 days due to the severe impact this will have on our property and our future. This is an enormous undertaking with unfathomable consequences for California, Kings County and our property and our neighbors.

Thank you for your time to extend the review and comment period an additional 730 days or longer.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Carol Walters".

Carol Walters

Chairman, CHSRA
Dan Richard &
Board

October 3, 2012

I have been reading and trying to read sections of the EIR/S for the Fresno to Bakersfield Section. I find that I need to read additional parts of the report in order to comprehend the section I am reading. This is taking longer to understand than I thought it would. I am also taking care of my ageing mother. Even through I am not working outside the home at this time, I find taking care of my mother's house, yard, and her take a great deal of my time.

I am asking that you extend the comment period 90 more days. I really would like to get a good idea what this EIR/S means to my property. I could understand this report much better if I have more time to review it.

Respectfully,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Karen J. Stout". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Karen J. Stout
2250 9th Ave.
Laton, Ca 93242-9620
559.381.6352

Aaron Fukuda
7450 Mountain View Street, Hanford, CA 93230

August 12, 2012

Chairman Dan Richard
California High Speed Rail Authority
770 L Street, Suite 800
Sacramento, California 95814

Subject: Revised Draft EIR/EIS: Fresno to Bakersfield - Public Review Extension

Dear Chairman Richard and Authority Board Members,

As a resident in California and a landowner who will be impacted by the High-Speed Alignment through Kings County I am requesting your agency allow the public an additional 90-days of review, which would make the total review time of 180-days. In my review process I am currently finding that I am only approximately 1/3 of the way through the document. The current task faced by myself and many others in the public is the ability to manage 15,000 pages of technical documentation, including reading, fact checking and note taking. Under the current time restraints a person would be required to read approximately 170 pages per day. The average person can read approximately 200 words per minute and the average number of words per page in the DEIR/EIS is approximately 600 words (sample pages were sampled and word counts done on each page). This means that it takes 3 minutes to read each page and having to read 170 pages per day would mean a person would need 510 minutes (8.5 hours) per day to review the DEIR/EIS. This only accounts for reading, the ability to take notes and comment increases the time requirements significantly.

The reasons for allowing a 180-day review period are as listed:

- Ability to read, comprehend and comment on 15,000+ pages of documents in 90-days is unrealistic and limits the transparent process the "New" Authority has committed to achieving.
- The timing of the review is problematic given its release during the late summer and conflicts with family summer vacations and the beginning of school. The review period for this document also coincides with the main harvest and peak farming activities in the Central Valley. Many farmers who have shown initiative to review this document have not been allowed the appropriate time to coordinate the DEIR/EIS review with their daily work schedules.
- Limited access of documents makes access for many difficult. Many of the people I have been talking to have attempted to access the document at public locations, however given limited hours of the locations, access is limited to the daytime. As many people work during the daytime it is difficult to read the document at public locations.
- The public generally works between 8:00 AM and 5:00 PM. In my instance my workday begins at 7:00 AM and I am able to get home around 6:30 PM. My only availability to direct my review is from approximately 7:00 PM and into the late evening. As the analysis provided earlier I would need 8.5 hours each day to accomplish a full reading, minus any meaningful review.
- It should be noted that review of the DEIR/EIS is not the only review required. As information is provided, I have found that given the lack of details and information provided one must search other sources, mainly the internet to verify the information and findings provided in the DEIR/EIS.
- The Authority has previously granted the public a 180-day review period for the Programmatic EIR, which was produced in 2005. The level of detail and analysis provided in the Programmatic EIR is significantly smaller, yet the public was allowed three-times the review period. The Authority has precedence to provide the public with an adequate review period.

- The time period between the first release of the Draft EIR/EIS and the Revised EIR/EIS was never advertized nor described by the Authority as a review period. The public generally had no idea of why a Revised Draft EIR/EIS was being prepared nor when it was going to be released. Given my review of the previous document and the Revised Draft EIR/EIS, it is not realistic to believe that just reading the highlighted areas yields a full understanding of the impacts.
- The Authority has provided significant changes in the Draft EIR/EIS. Although changes are highlighted in the main document, changes made to Technical Documents and Appendices have not been highlighted. Therefore, I along with the public are having to review all of these documents again to determine if conflicts have been addressed and where changes have been made.

Under California law (the California Environmental Quality Act), public participation is an essential part of the review process to ensure that there is a meaningful and effective comment and review period. Information gathered through this process will guide lead agency identification of impacts and development of mitigation measures. By limiting the effective review period of the DEIR/EIS, the Authority will ensure the public review process will be limited and ineffective. The high-speed rail project is a multi-decade project. The extension of 90 days for review will not significantly impact the overall schedule. Also the greater amount of public participation and comments provided by the people who know the impacts the greatest will provide cost savings by knowing impacts ahead of the construction phase.

For the reasons above, I request that the Authority grant myself and the public a 180-day Revised Draft EIR/EIS review period. This extension alleviates many of the issues listed above and accommodates a reasonable review time for the public. As the Authority moves forward with this project it is incumbent upon you to act responsibly and in protection of the public interest, this includes and should emphasize those who will be asked to sacrifice the most for this project. A failure to acknowledge this request will only signify that the old regime of the Authority is simply too entrenched to be replaced by a "New" Authority paradigm as has been touted by the Authority in recent months.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Aaron Fukuda", with a long horizontal line extending to the right.

Aaron Fukuda

cc:
Kings County Board of Supervisors
Governor Jerry Brown

Ross C. Browning

8646 Cairo Ave. Laton, CA 93242
h: 559-584-2992 c: 559-589-5204
e-Mail RCBrowning@AOL.com

October 4, 2012

Chairman and
Members of the Board of the
California High-Speed Rail Authority
770 L Street, Suite 800
Sacramento, CA 95814

Re: Fresno to Bakersfield High Speed Train (HST) Project Revised DEIR/Supplemental DEIS

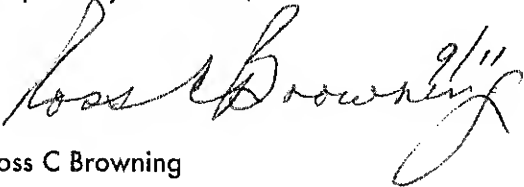
Dear Chairman Richard and HSRA Board Members,

On behalf of myself and many other California residents who are attempting to provide a meaningful review of the above referenced document, I hereby request that you give consideration to and grant an additional 90 day review period.

The reason for this request is that there is no way to read, understand, analyze, and comment on the amount of material presented in the time allotted, or at least I find that I am unable to digest the material that fast. This process would go somewhat faster and easier if the over 26 Technical Documents, that are constantly being referred to, were available in printed form or at least available on a DVD.

I endeavor to do my part in this process, may I ask that you do the same?

Respectfully submitted,



Ross C Browning

Ross C. Browning

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October 4, 2012

Dan Richard, Chairman of the Board of the
California High-Speed Rail Authority
770 L Street, Suite 800
Sacramento, CA 95814

Subject: Public Document Request

Dear Chairman Richard:

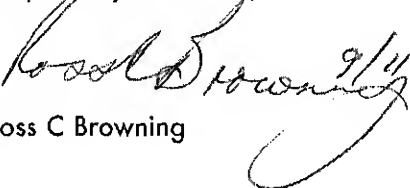
A while back you identified John Popoff to me as "your go to guy for speed and travel-time issues. I had a conversation with John last month and he agreed with your characterization. I then asked to see one of the studies at which time I was told that there were no studies. When pressed on this matter, John said that he had looked at a few items, but no studies. By the way, "looked at" is engineering speak for I studied it. At this time the meeting was about to start so I didn't press the matter.

Later in the month, at one of the public meetings, I again approached John and told him that I just couldn't believe that there were no speed or travel-time studies done for the alignments that were and had been in consideration as a HST possibility. There was just too much at stake to rely on one's gut feeling. We then got into a discussion about me not believing that they could make the San Francisco to San José segment in 30 minutes with the current level of CalTrain service on the peninsula. John then admitted that there were in fact studies that had been done, but that he couldn't share them with me as they belonged to the Authority.

Now Dan, I'm sure that you can imagine my surprise, when in reviewing some paper that were laying around, I came across a Dan Richard's statement that no speed studies had been done or were available. Which is it, they exist or they don't, you've got them or you don't, can't have it both ways now.

So it is in the spirit of openness, cooperation and full and complete transparency that I make this request for any document in any form that includes data dealing with the speed of the train and elapsed times from waypoint to waypoint between San Francisco and the furthest station south for alignments that have been considered to date. I would especially like to see data that has been done along the I-5 and Hwy 99 corridors.

Respectfully submitted,

 9/14
Ross C Browning

Ross C. Browning

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October 4, 2012

Mr. Jeff Morales, CEO
California High-Speed Rail Authority
770 L Street, Suite 800
Sacramento, CA 95814

Re: Public Document Request

Dear Mr. Morales:

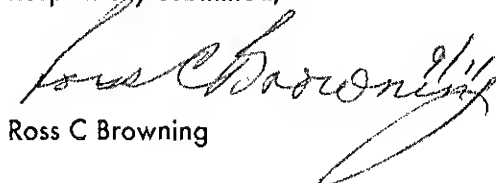
You have been quoted on camera saying that the current High Speed Train (HST) alignment meets the criteria as outlined in Prop 1A, where feasible. This statement was used to justify the elimination of the I-5 corridor and most of the Hwy 99 corridor as potential HST alignments. Research shows that I-5 and portions of Hwy 99 were both eliminated from serious HST consideration sometime either in or before 2005, but in any case well before the arrival of Prop 1A in 2008 and also your arrival as CEO in 2012.

I am formally requesting from you, under the provisions of the Public Document Request statute, the following data in either paper or DVD format.

- the definition of the word feasible as used to determine that the I-5 route in its entirety and selected portions of Hwy-99 that were and were not deemed to be suitable as transportation corridor candidates for the HST.
- the source used for that definition.
- any studies, reports, papers, memos, notes, slide shows or video presentations that were made or used in the determination that I-5 was not suitable as a transportation corridor for HST consideration. Also any determination that Hwy 99 was not suitable in its entirety as a transportation corridor for HST.
- any studies, reports, papers, memos, notes, slide shows or video presentations that were made or used in the determination that the current HST alignment through cities, schools, churches, hospitals, medical facilities, police and fire stations, playgrounds, museums, historic sites, office and municipal buildings, parks, rural roads, farms, homes, dairies, water recharge basins, waste water ponding sites, veterinarian facilities, and animal treatment and disposal facilities were superior to any of the existing transportation corridors that were not selected.

I make the request for these data in the spirit of full cooperation and transparency, which the latest High Speed Rail Authority and its Board has stated is it's mode of operation.

Respectfully submitted,


Ross C Browning